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Sociological Terminology and Social Organization of the Ekonda
[Soziologische Terminologie und soziale Organisation der Ekonda]

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Introduction

114 This study is based on the preliminary work connected with the publication of the results of the "Mainz Congo Expedition 1951-54" in which I participated as an assistant to Dr. Sulzmann.

121 In order to describe and characterize the kinship and local groups of the Ekonda, they should first be regarded as ethno-sociological ideal types (1). For this purpose it was

1. For the concept of type, see Thurnwald, Menschliche Gesellschaft [Human Society], Vol. 1, p. 7 ff.; Mühlmann, Methodik [Methodology], p. 114 ff.; and Wörterbuch der Soziologie [Dictionary of Sociology], p. 224 f.

necessary to obtain a clear understanding of the meaning of the terms used to describe the types. Studies by Thurnwald (2),

2. Menschliche Gesellschaft [Human Society], Vols. 2, 4.

Kirchhoff (3), Murdock (4) (4a), Radcliffe-Brown (5), Lowie (6),

3. "Verwandtschaftsorganisation [Kinship Organization], Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Vol. 63, pp. 85-193; "Verwandtschaftsbezeichnungen [Kinship Terminology], "Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Vol. 64, pp. 41-71.

4. Social Structure.

4a. "Changing Emphasis."

5. "Study of Kinship Systems."

6. Primitive Society.

121 and Lévi-Strauss (7) were consulted (8).

7. Structures élémentaires.

8. I am particularly indebted to Prof. Mühlmann for his advice and references to source material.

By their very nature, all attempts to recognize ethnosociological ideal types must remain incomplete and are in constant need of revision on the basis of ethnographic reality (9).

9. Mühlmann, Methodik, p. 120.

Such revision can only be carried out if each field worker, while studying his material, compares the existing terminology with "his" realities and if he then submits the result of this comparison to the scrutiny of others. Unfortunately the use of ethnosociological terms is often dictated primarily by the convictions and preferences of the individual author who may neither refer to the existing terminology nor otherwise inform the reader of what he means exactly by the various terms. Many authors in this respect follow such unreliable standards as their "feeling for the language" or they act under the delusion that their private terminology corresponds to what is generally accepted. Too often, however, the actual usage differs considerably from what has been suggested in terminological studies. As a result terms like "clan," "kinship group [Sippe]," and "large family [Gross familie]" create different impressions among different readers.

In the present study the terminology of the authors mentioned above will be discussed in relation to the kinship and local groups of the Ekonda. We are concerned here with the [101] northwestern subdivision of the Ekonda who live in the Bikoro territory. The Ekonda belong to the large group, the Mongo.

12| It was said before that kinship and local groups are to be discussed. This statement needs clarification. When speaking of local groups in the present study, we do not intend to refer to groups which consist of non-related subgroups. It is to be clearly understood that the residence pattern will be used as the decisive criterion for subdividing the groups. Thus, closely related groups may be excluded, more distantly related groups may be included. Occasionally such local units also include groups which are not related to each other. [189]

Also, among those groups which I have called kinship groups in this study, a biological or genealogical connection which can be proved and expressed in juridical terms is quite doubtful. We shall not concern ourselves, however, with this lack of precision; rather, we shall regard as related those persons or groups of persons whom the Ekonda themselves consider as related. In my opinion there is no justification for disregarding the attitude of the natives since it is their attitude which determines the character and function of the groups. Murdock (10)

10. Social Structure, p. 47.

uses this approach to the kinship group, while using the term "lineage" for persons who can prove their relationship. We hasten to point out that also the local groups have a tendency toward "paternalization" (11), to construe a closer relationship.

11. Boelaert, "Clan équivoque," p. 17.

The Kinship Structure of the Ekonda

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602 Among the Ekonda we find a system of groups which are ordered according to degrees of real or assumed kinship. This system is subdivided into a hierarchical structure of many ranks. Larger groups consist of between one to four groups of the next order. The relationships between the groups correspond to the relationships between their founding ancestors. In this fashion certain groups are described as the older or younger brother of

61 another group. According to their relationship to others, groups
602 may be designated as:

brother, younger or older;

brother or half brother (descended from various wives of the polygynous ancestor);

[848] Illegitimate child of the sister which, legally, as the child of the oldest brother or of the father of his mother, belongs to the group of the mother's relatives;

child of a boy who together with his sister has moved to the unit of his brothers-in-law and has settled there permanently;

son of a sister, who for some reason has separated from his paternal relatives and has moved in with the group of his mother or of one of his grandmothers.

601 Present-day social relationships are influenced by this variety of kinship relations. The kinship terms which refer to the relationships of the genuine or assumed ancestors to each other are occasionally transferred to the groups.

614 In this paper we shall describe the Isangi group (12) as an
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12. Müller, Fürstentum [Kingdom], pp. 68 ff., 125, 128 ff.

[101] example of hierarchical kinship structure. Isangi is a local group of the type described above (p. 1). Following the custom of the region, I shall refer to it as a "village." Until we have decided which terms are applicable to the various groups, I shall use the letters A to E for the individual ranks of the hierarchical structure. Within this system A shall stand for the smallest and E for the largest units (see Diagram 2).[1]

In addition to the three ranks of Group D in Isangi, there are others in the daughter villages (see Diagram 1). These may also include foreign groups, as, for example, the "Nkundó" group, Liimbu, in Wengá.

[1] [See page 6, category 116.—Analyst]

602 All the groups represented on the diagram (Diagram 2)
614 are known by their names to the adults of Isangi. In addition to
621 their regular name, all these groups also have a "drum" name
[552] and an "honorary" name. Only the three Boyeke groups of rank B have different drum names but no individual group names. The arrangement of groups as found on the diagram does not represent a genealogy. It is based simply on the characteristics and functions of the individual groups [190] which in each case are equal to each other on one rank. Thus, we have here an organizational diagram, not a genealogical table. [Diagrams 1 and 2 appear here.]

The people of Isangi are also well aware of the relationships between the individual groups, but they are not as clearly conscious of the system as it appears in our diagram. They are able to describe the kinship relations between the groups and they can point out which functions are assigned to the individual groups without, however, regarding the groups as equal to one another because they have like functions and without seeing them as part of a system as we do. Thus, our diagram represents a systematization which, by its very nature, does not wholly do justice to reality. Correspondingly, therefore, there is no satisfactory Ekonda social terminology.

[191] [Diagram 3 appears here.] Just as in nonscientific European usage, the terms lack sufficient precision. Furthermore, in principle the nature of the groups between rank A to E and of the still larger units is similar, and as a result all the terms are used almost indiscriminately for large and small units alike.

601 Usually, the word ikundf (literally, "lap") refers to small
621 units, approximately those of ranks A and B, but it is also used
614 for larger and large units if their relatively close degree of kinship is to be stressed. Thus it approximately corresponds to the meaning of the word "family" as used in nonscientific language. The word ilongo refers both to what in European usage is described as the small family [Kleinfamilie] and also to groups of ranks A and B.

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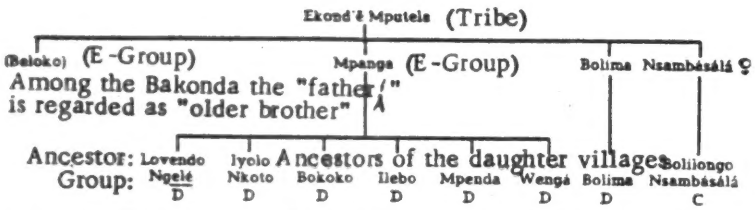

Diagram 1. Genealogy of the Bakonda. Letters below the group names refer to the rank of the respective groups (see Diagram 2).

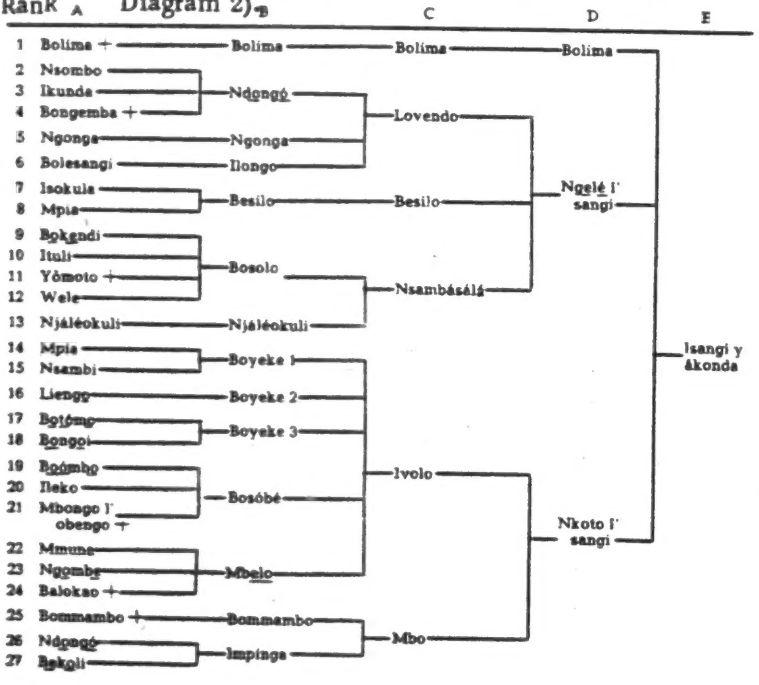

Diagram 2. Kinship Structure of Isangi.

1-27 = Numbering of the A-Groups shown in Diagram 3.

+ = extinct group.

1 [i.e. of LONYANYANGA, L.]

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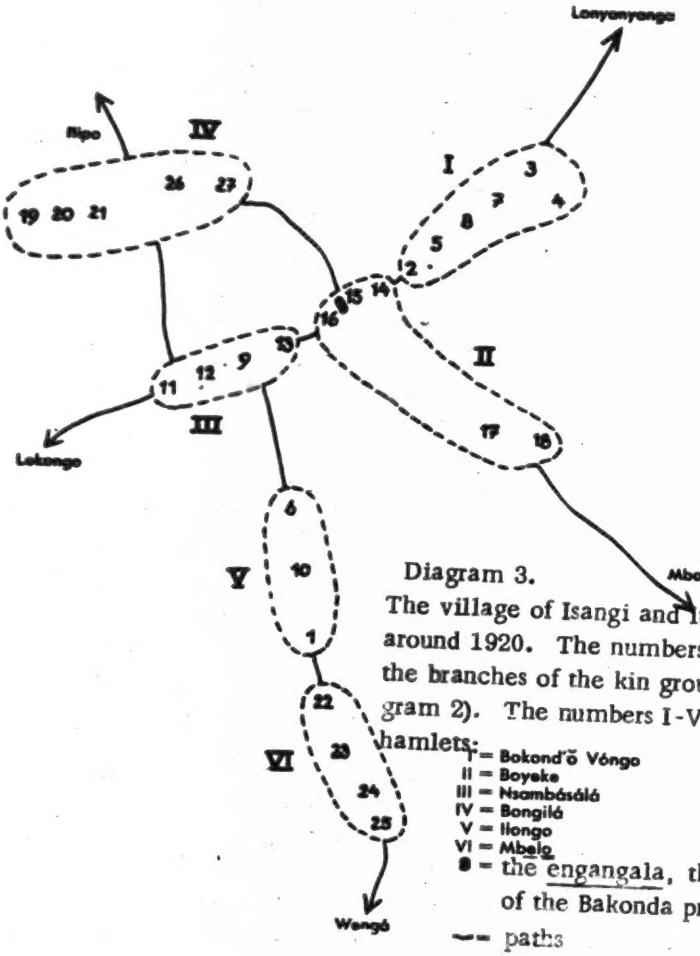

Diagram 3.
The village of Isangi and its territory around 1920. The numbers 1-27 denote the branches of the kin groups (see Diagram 2). The numbers I-VI refer to the hamlets:

I = Bokond'ō Vóngo
II = Boyeke
III = Nsambásáló
IV = Bongiló
V = Ilongo
VI = Mbelo
8 = the engangala, the meeting place of the Bakonda province
—— paths

601 Bonsonga and etúká are terms used for kinship groups of
621 ranks B, C, and D, but occasionally they may also refer to
614 [192] the groups listed under A and, in addition, to the local groups which in size approximately correspond to the kinship units mentioned above. Etúká is the term used for the oil palm grove and for a certain kind of termite hill; apparently it is used for local groups more frequently than the term bonsonga.

[571] Another term whose meaning varies is ekíndá. This word
[535] designates, first of all, a dance group, a corps de ballet, and also the social unit which sends such a joint dance troupe to dance festivals.

Esé also has strong local connotations. It is usually identical with what we call a village, but frequently units which are larger or smaller than a village are designated as esé. Very large groups, tribes and even larger units, are called bonanga.

614 As a criterion for placing the individual groups within a certain rank, one or several functions have been chosen in each case. The groups of the individual ranks are described below relative to their functions. On the subject of groups it should be added that in general they do not differ from each other in certain traits. All groups of all ranks are kinship units of patrilineal descent. They consider themselves descendants of one ancestor. No continuous and complete genealogy which can be traced back to the original ancestor is known. The genealogy of the entire group of the Bakonda is shown in Diagram 1.

In Isangi two of the ancestors of the groups of rank D are brothers, the third is the brother of their father. A D-group (Ngelé) includes, in addition, the descendants of an illegitimate child of the paternal sister of the ancestor. These offspring form the C-group, Nsambásálá.

There is a gap between this ancient genealogy and the known ancestors from the recent past. In contrast with that of the neighboring Bokóté [Bokete] (see, for example, Boelaert, "Les Bongili"), the genealogical memory of the Ekonda is weak. [173] It does not reach back to the ancestor of the group of rank A. In this connection we must take into account the fact that a group

614 splits up only after the death of the ancestor to whom the new groups can be traced back. The descendants of a patriarch split up into the groups of his sons only when these groups have reached the necessary size. Considering the size of even the smallest Ekonda groups this can occur only after several generations. By this time, however, the common patriarch and his sons, the ancestors of the new subgroups, are dead. Thus, at the present time we find a tendency to split in the Ndong'impinga group; the ancestors of the two groups which are now in the process of forming died about 1920. Most probably these two groups, so far as their age relationship to one another is concerned, will not grade themselves according to the relationship of these "tribal ancestors," but according to the relationship of the "patriarchs" under whom the separation takes place. The exact process of such a split of A-groups cannot be established afterwards through questions; it can only be observed on the spot while it is taking place.

In the following chapters we shall describe the groups of the various ranks and their characteristics.

Groups of Rank A

These groups consist of as many as forty persons. In most
563 cases, a group of Batwá-Pygmoids is part of such a group. Having the function of helots, they belong to the A-group of their masters, and this membership is passed on through the male line in the same manner as among their masters. Excepting Pygmoids, the oldest member of the A group is the bomélé bokonda, the "owner of the land"; he is the personification of all authority within the group and its representative in the group's dealings with outsiders. He is the only person who is completely in charge. All members of the group are in a father-son relationship to him [193] even if the younger members -- as counted by generations -- have the rank of father in relation to him. He administers and issues the group's treasury of objects used for buying a bride. He also disposes of the landed property of the group.

614 He represents the A-group in the council of elders of the village and of the other large units. Since no members of the group [672] are considered capable of conducting affairs, all the legal transactions which they undertake are treated as though they had been sanctioned by the patriarch. To a large extent the members of the group may represent one another. In the absence of the elder, a younger member may act as the representative of the [623] group at council meetings. When the senior member dies, his function will be taken over by the next oldest member of the group.

614 602 An A-group will split up only through internal conflicts which cannot be bridged or through a large population increase. The newly-formed A-groups continue to maintain a close relationship which, at first, is much closer than among the B-groups whose A-groups have split much earlier. In the higher ranks cohesion after the split diminishes only gradually; thus many gradations develop in the feeling of cohesion. These gradations could not be even approximately reproduced in a diagram with any degree of exactitude. There is no formula by which the split takes place, as there is, for example, among the Tallensi (13)

13. Fortes, The Dynamics of Clanship, p. 34 f.

where it is determined by a certain number of generations. 614 Theoretically the A-groups are "eternal." The A-groups are 596 subdivided into small families. Within the polygynous families 592 nuclear families [Familienkerne] (14) have a semi-independent

14. Thurnwald, Menschliche Gesellschaft, Vol. 4, p. 12.

position economically. Each wife has her own house. A husband's wives and the wives of his sons have their houses within the same homestead. As the master of the homestead, the father has an open shelter where the men spend their time and [768] hold their meetings. Upon the death of the master of the

614 homestead, it is deserted by the inhabitants. On the new dwelling
596 site the sons each build their own shelter. In contrast to the
592 groups of the type A-E, the group living within a homestead is
[768] finite: its existence ends with the father's death. Only a man whose father (in the European meaning of the term) has died may have a shelter. Thus the homestead community is interposed between the A-group and the small family.

614 To sum up the characteristic features of the A-groups: Membership determined by male descent; unity of legal power, especially insofar as landed property and inheritance law is concerned the senior has full power; succession by simple seniority; theoretically unlimited existence of the group. The A-groups consist of small families who live together in homesteads under one father in each case.

Groups of Rank B

614 There is usually a friendly, neighborly relationship be-
793 tween the A-groups which form part of a B-group. People assist each other to a large extent, and there is joint consultation on most matters. Group B has only one Nkúmú iloki, "master of the hidden power," the priest of the kinship group, who is consulted by all the members of the group. He functions during the magical preparations for the hunt; he is consulted before any important undertaking. During the leave-taking ceremony after a burial, he converses with the deceased, and people turn to him when the ancestors have appeared to them in their dreams to transmit their desires, orders, or other information to the living. He protects the people of his group from the ill will, ndoki, of the dead and the living. The priest of the kinship group is used as the criterion [194] to determine which group of homogeneous A-groups represents a B-group. The priest of the kinship group is descended from a certain one of the related A-groups.

614 There is a difference in rank among the A-groups of a
554 B-group -- one group will be regarded as older -- but this is

614 only of lesser importance (see below, under local groups). The
554 headman of the B-group is the oldest of the seniors of the related A-groups, that is, the senior of the B-group. He is not, however, fully in charge of affairs like the elder of the A-group; he should rather be seen as princeps inter pares. This, of course, does not affect his position as senior of his own A-group.

614 Within a B-group landed property is often still regarded
423 as belonging together, even though fixed boundaries between the territories of the constituent groups may already exist. In general, however, it may be assumed that the other elders will not object if a hunting expedition is extended to their territory, if, under certain circumstances, the soil of their district is used for planting, or if certain wild plants are taken from there for building a house or as raw material for a craftsman. Membership in a B-group is determined by membership in an A-group.

614 At this point we shall not enter into a discussion of the
895 genealogical peculiarities which result from the significance of the bride price. We learned of one case of incest which occurred between members of two A-groups which formed a B-group, but we have not heard of anything like that occurring within an A-group. In this connection, however, we do not refer to those acts of incest which are required to make a particularly powerful charm become effective.

Summing up all that is characteristic of B-groups:

614 There is only one priest of the kinship group; cohesion within a B-group is very close, people cooperate extensively, all important matters are decided by the group, even those which, strictly speaking, concern only the constituent A-groups; in this connection, the oldest of the seniors has a somewhat privileged position.

Groups of Rank C

The cohesion within a group of this category is considerably looser, although on this level particularly one can find great differences among the individual groups. For example, the groups Lovendo and Besilo consider themselves much closer

614 to each other than either of these groups with Nsambásálé (see Diagram 2). It was for this reason that in my dissertation I divided this rank into two different ranks (kinship subgroups I° and II°). (15) Since there are no obvious criteria for the two

15. Müller, Fürstentum, p. 125.

ranks and since such a division is not possible in the other villages, I no longer make such distinctions.

[582] The groups of rank C are the exogamous units of the future. Although marriage is not permitted between the mem-
[835] bers of different C-groups, sexual relations between them are permitted. This permission corresponds to the lonkana of the Bokóté (16).

16. Hulstaert, "Mariage," p. 97.f.

Groups of Rank D

614 The groups of this category constitute the truly exogamous
582 units. It is true that marriages between "advanced persons" ["evolués"] take place even within rank D, but this practice is still frowned upon by the old people. In Isangi we also find the special stipulation that members of two D-groups, Ngelé and Nkoto, may intermarry, [195] but they may not enter into marriage with members of the D-group, Bolíma. Since in present-day Isangi, Bolíma is extinct, this stipulation only works to the disadvantage of the emigrants in Bolíma w'ási and of the children of sisters in other villages. The Bolíma group is regarded as the father group of Isangi (see Diagram 1); Ngelé is the group of the older brother, Nkoto that of the younger brother. This serves as an explanation for the special position of Bolíma in the exogamous system. It is said that it would not be right for a "father" to marry one of his "children" even if these children are the offspring of such distant generations that they intermarry.

614 582 The exogamy rules of the Ekonda do not only refer to their own, agnatic group, but also to all cognate groups to whom kinship relations can still be traced back, i.e., a span of about five generations.

Groups of Rank E

614 621 It may be assumed that these groups always extend beyond the confines of a village. Those parts of a group who have settled next to each other have their communal meeting place, but even the dispersed fractions of the group may come there to consult. In former times probably only one such group had a nkɔ́mɔ́, a sacred prince who lived in the main village (e.g., Isangi), while the other villages were ruled by the senior. Once the title of nkɔ́mɔ́ was also bestowed on persons from other villages, the importance of the E-groups almost completely disappeared. Also, in this category the local group plays a much greater role. Occasionally it even includes dependent [609] villages which have not yet been "paternalized," i.e., which are still regarded as alien. In this connection it should be mentioned that probably all larger local groups tend to reconstitute themselves into kinship groups by reinterpreting the genealogy to suit their purposes. It is certain that the "kinship relation" of many "kinship groups" has been created in this manner. We may dismiss the possibility that groups which are divided from one another by the rule of exogamy will invent a kinship relation so close that a previously possible marriage would be outlawed. Also, the combination of other important functions of the lower ranks resulting from the invention of a closer relationship would run counter to the tendency of progressive differentiation (17).

17. We know through statements of the natives that about one hundred years ago the exogamy limit was lowered to the present level. Before that time only the Lonkɔ́na was permitted among the Ngele, Nkoto, and Bolɔ́ma.

614 621 In general one may assume that local groups will postulate only that kind of kinship relationship which does not necessitate a substantial functional reintegration. For this reason, units above the exogamy limit will easily tend to construe a genealogy which "proves" a kinship relationship. Groups of that type are functionally weak. One can observe processes of this kind both among the group of the Bakonda and among the neighboring E-group, Lonyanyanga. The institution of the nkámá (see above, p. 14) also appears to have a leveling influence. The privileges of the oldest (and free) group diminish in importance and fall behind the office of nkámá. The new office is also open to younger and dependent groups.

Sociological Terminology for Kinship Groups

128 Before dealing with the units which are to be regarded as settlement groups, we shall compare the kinship groups of the Ekonda with the sociological ideal types. Keeping in mind the authors mentioned at the beginning, I shall now discuss the various terms used for groups which are applicable to conditions found among the Ekonda. [196]

Family

121 596 The small family is of no importance in the organizational system of the Ekonda. Nevertheless it is very important as the smallest unit of economic life. Each small family is potentially polygynous, but monogynous marriages are more numerous at the present time, especially among the younger generation. In view of this difference between potential and practiced polygyny, it seems advisable to follow Thurnwald in classing the polygamous forms together with the small family and to differentiate its nuclear families (18). In my opinion this approach

18. Vol. 4, p. 12 f.

seems to correspond more closely to its functional importance than Murdock's view, according to which the polygamous family

121 596 together with the large family [Grossfamilie] is put into the category of "composite forms of family" (19). In Thurnwald's

19. Murdock, Social Structure, p. 23.

"Technical Terms" there are two passages dealing with the large family, one under the heading "Family," p. 12 f., the other under "Large Family," p. 14. Under "Family" Thurnwald writes:

"...The 'large family' differs from the family in that in the former several generations with a common grandfather live together in the same homestead or even under the same roof. The nuclear families, and the men forming part of them, remain relatively independent. Naturally, even in this unit relatives lacking any protection may be taken into the group. The large family differs from the kinship group (q. v.) in that in the former all its members live in the same dwelling site, and the degree of kinship between the members is mainly seen in a line descending from the head; in addition, it forms an economic unit. A further characteristic feature of the large family lies in the fact that it resembles any family in being tied to the life of the persons who constitute it and that it becomes extinct with them, while a kinship group renews itself automatically. It is, in a manner of speaking, 'eternal'."

Under the heading "Large Family," he writes only: "... The phenomenon of at least three generations descended from one another living together under a common head (grandfather with children and children's children) is defined as 'large family' (see Family, Kinship Group)." There is a discrepancy between these two definitions. If, according to the first definition, a group dissolves upon the death of the persons constituting it, i.e., the oldest generation, the phrase "at least" may be valid for the norm, but not for the specific case. Thurnwald defines the family in the same manner in Lehrbuch der Völkerkunde [Textbook of Ethnology] (20). If we accept Thurnwald's definition --

20. Thurnwald in: Preuss (Ed.), Lehrbuch, p. 289.

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596 the material collected by Kirchhoff (21) and the ancient Roman

21. Kirchhoff, Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Vol. 63, p. 88 ff., p. 96 ff.

familia would serve as good examples -- a patrilineal large family could be described as a kinship group, living, working, and maintaining a household together, consisting of a husband, his wives, and all his offspring, and splitting into the large families of his sons upon the death of the father.

Kirchhoff defines the large family in the same fashion, yet he takes care to point out that here, in constrast to a kinship group, persons who have married into the group are part of it (22).

22. Kirchhoff, Zeitschrift für Ethnologie, Vol. 63, p. 90.

Murdock's conception of the "extended family" is identical with this interpretation (23).

23. Murdock, Social Structure, p. 24.

On the other hand, in Vol. 2 (p. 22) Thurnwald regards the large family as a unilateral kinship group with persons who have married into it. This group lives in the same place and is governed by a common chief from whom all the members are supposedly descended. The kinship group, in contrast to the large family, may be scattered. [197] Thus, Thurnwald at this point puts other characteristics in the foreground, but the text allows the conclusion that for Thurnwald the dependence on the life of the head of the families and its temporary nature are the essential characteristics of a large family.

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614 In this sense none of the units described under $A\text{-}E^{1}_{A}$ is a large family. The wives who have married into the group belong to the group of the husband, but they always remain part of their father's group; in case of divorce they return to the

$^{1}_{A}$ [pages 9-15, category 116.-Analyst]

596 latter group. Another factor which reminds us of the wife's con-
614 tinuing membership in her original group is the connection, never completely severed, between the groups related by marriage, illustrated by the practice of gifts and counter-gifts which are all part of the bride price and the dowry. When she dies, the
[764] wife is buried in the soil of her group. In addition, the group membership of the wife is transferred to the children, although this does not have the same effects in economic and political
[611] terms. Matrilineal descent is important in relation to marriage restrictions, certain avoidance practices which are passed on through the wives, and also certain privileges. Quite a large number of persons has settled permanently in the group of their mother or that of their grandmothers.

The decisive factor that makes the term "large family" unsuitable is the "eternal" character of the A-E groups of the Ekonda. However, the subdivisions of the A-groups which live together in a common homestead (see p. 10) may be regarded as large families in the sense used by Thurnwald, Kirchhoff, and Murdock.

Kinship Group

614 In the definitions of the term "family" quoted above,
121 we already learned something about Thurnwald's concept of a kinship group, but there is an additional reference to the technical term "kinship group" ["Sippe"]" (p. 17 f.) (24):

24. Menschliche Gesellschaft, Vol. 4.

"...A kinship group is defined as a clan (q.v.) which is not politically independent. Usually the loss of independence is caused by the distribution of the people of the clan among the various settlements. A kinship group is held together by the consciousness of being descended from the same ancestors and by their common cult of the ancestors. The kinship group is of special importance for the regulation of marriage (q.v.). -- A kinship group may be divided into kinship subgroups (large

121 614 kinship group [Grossippe], small kinship group [Kleinsippe]), or it may have a tendency to split in half. A kinship group or a kinship subgroup may at times have a chief, at times not."

On the term "clan" Thurnwald writes (p. 16) (24):

24. Menschliche Gesellschaft, Vol. 4.

"The word is of Old Irish origin, where it refers to children of common descent, approximately in the sense of a 'large family' (q. v.). We now use it for family agglomerations (see Horde) who have become stabilized, who have a religious substructure through their belief in common ancestors, and who support each other economically and politically. It is advisable to make a distinction between the 'clan' which settles exclusively within one region and which claims this region for itself, thus forming a politically sovereign community, and the splinters of a clan scattered among communities which are independent in their own right, which we designate as 'kinship groups' (q. v.) and which usually are not tied to each other by any organizational framework; their cohesion is simply the result of the ceremonial-religious cult of the ancestors and a certain degree of solidarity. The origin of the clan and kinship group is closely related to the cult of the ancestors which symbolizes descent lines. Membership in a clan or in a kinship group may be reckoned in the male or female lines. Frequently one of the living family heads represents this family agglomeration which is, so to speak, [198] 'crystallized.' In this respect it differs from familial structures which become extinct upon the death of the persons by whom they were founded. In a clan or a kinship group the families succeeding each other are permanently represented (see Family, Caste, State)."

We may state that a common feature of both forms is that we are dealing here with purely unilateral units which are tied to each other by ancestor worship (this ancestor worship may be -- in many cases, it will be -- absent in the large family as described above). If we disregard the attempt inherent in both

definitions to present a theory of development, the differentiation between the two terms appears to me to be very useful, and this seems particularly true if we accept the first definition of clan given by Thurnwald and regard the second as completely irrelevant for our present purposes.

It is true that our A-group lives in a certain district which it claims for itself as its own "province," but it is nevertheless difficult to describe this district as a politically sovereign community. A political nature could rather be attributed to those groups which, up to now, we have not described at all, i.e., the settlement communities. Proceeding further, the A-group is integrated into the B-group, the B-group into the C-group, thus forming an endless chain; among those tribes who have a greater degree of genealogical consciousness than the Ekonda -- for example, the neighboring Bongili (25) -- the hierarchy of groups

25. Boelaert, "Les Bongili."

ends with mankind, the hierarchy of ancestors with God.

Thurnwald emphasizes this ranked structure, especially in discussing the kinship group. Kirchhoff, however, fails to deal with the problem of the kinship group in a manner which would be of value to us in differentiating between kinship group and clan. Dealing with the organizational structure of the peoples he discussed, he naturally was more interested in defining the border between large family and kinship group. Lowie (26)

26. Primitive Society.

only discusses the kinship group, "sib," calling it the "'clan' of British anthropologists", (p. 105) or "clans," if patrilineal, and "gentes," if matrilineal, "of most American anthropologists." The "ad infinitum" (p. 106) is also stressed by him in relation to the kinship group. Lowie also admits the possibility of subdivision with respect to his "sib," and consequently he even includes in the kinship group such forms as the "moieties," which according to Thurnwald's definition are still part of it, but which in his view

and in general ethnological usage are units of a special type. Thus Lowie's and Thurnwald's views correspond to a large extent. Murdock (27) clearly differentiates between a kinship

27. Social Structure, p. 45 ff.

group and a "lineage." In his view a lineage consists of a group of individuals who are able to trace their descent to a common ancestor, which for him in the majority of cases is only the unilateral "stem" [Stamm] of a large family, excluding those who have married into the group, but including the members who have married out.

Murdock's and Thurnwald's concepts of the kinship group are identical. On the other hand, Murdock differs in his definition of the clan (28).

28. Social Structure, p. 65 ff., especially p. 69 f.

Clan

Murdock regards the patrilineal clan as a local group which consists of the stem of a kinship group and which incorporates the wives of its members but excludes daughters who marry. As an example he mentioned the "groups" which in our society are connected by the same family name. If the group of persons bearing the birth-name "Wolf" in common functioned as a group of relatives, it would [199] be a Wolf kinship group, but those persons who actually call themselves "Wolf," i.e., the Messrs. Wolf with their wives, sons, unmarried sisters, and daughters, would constitute a Wolf clan (assuming, of course, that this group really functions). This concept of a clan is new. Even Murdock does not consider this definition very satisfactory and invites better suggestions. According to Murdock, the clan is a unit of eminent importance; terminologically it has not been possible so far to differentiate it from the kinship group. It is irrelevant in this connection whether the term clan is applicable to this

social group. It is true that the "Murdock clan" also exists among the Ekonda on all the lower ranks, but only as a functional unit which, like the large family and small family, is not really regarded as a group by the Ekonda. Among the Ekonda the feeling of cohesion between the indigenous group and those who have married into it has its basis not so much in the groups of relatives as described above, but rather in the local group of the type discussed further below.

The units which we described in the first part of this study correspond neither to the definition of Thurnwald nor to that of Murdock as regards the term clan. Our groups differ from the clan as described by Thurnwald by their hierarchical structure over which functions of authority are distributed. An added factor is that Thurnwald in the Lehrbuch (29) wants to define the

29. Thurnwald: in Preuss, Lehrbuch, p. 259 f.

difference between clan and kinship group by size and by ascribing to the former the element of political power. The only kinship group of the Ekonda which possesses strong authority, however, is the smallest, the one of rank A. If we let ourselves be guided by the criterion of authority, we would have to regard the smallest group (rank A) as a clan. Using the criterion of size, however, we would have to regard one of the groups of ranks D or E as a clan. Hence this term is unsuitable.

For the above reasons I have used the term "kinship group" [Sippe] for the groups of all ranks. With respect to the E-groups one might even speak of a subtribe [Unterstamm], but it should be pointed out that as far as the Ekonda are concerned all the groups mentioned above, including the tribes [Stämme] are groups or relatives of the same type, i.e., are "kinship groups."

For the purpose of differentiating between the kinship groups of the various ranks I have used the terms:

nuclear kinship group [Kernsippe] for groups of rank A;

small kinship group [Kleinsippe] for groups of rank B;

614 kinship subgroup [Untersippe] for groups of rank C;
kinship group [Sippe] for groups of rank D (the exogamous units);
large kinship group [Grosssippe] for groups of rank E.

Local Organization

361 621 178 The second diagram[1A] shows the settlement pattern of the Isangi group in its old settlement area up to 1949. At this time Isangi was relocated near the highway. Only two of the nuclear kinship groups of Isangi can lay claim to territory reaching far enough toward the east as to extend beyond the new highway. Thus, the resettlement process has led to a complete change of the settlement pattern. However, the functions of the settlement communities have not yet been adapted to the new settlement. At present the inhabitants are still so engaged in speculation about the possibility of a return to their own old territory that they have not yet reformed their village organization.

621 614 We observe that the village is divided into six settlement communities (30), each of which consists only of the members

30. See Diagram 3.

of one of the two kinship groups of Isangi. [200] We find that only the group of the father, which formerly was a kinship group in its own right, is attached to one settlement community of the kinship group Ngelé. Incidentally, we might point out that the names of the two kinship groups, Ngelé and Nkoto, mean "down the river" and "up the river." The older group is called "down the river" since in ngelé the river is large and wide. We come across this honorary term for the older group in some other villages although there is not always an "up-river" group. No corresponding settlement pattern can be found.

614 621 202 624 The degree of cohesion among the constituent kinship groups in settlement community I is so strong that the entire community has a communal bokendi, a communal messenger.

1A [page 7, category 116.—Analyst]

614 621 202 624 It is the task of the messengers to transmit all important messages to the other groups in accordance with a precise plan; this is particularly true regarding the invitations to the meetings of the village council with the nkúmú. At the same time they inform the other groups as to the program of the meeting. The first messenger calls on the messenger of the other community; the old men are gathered at the latter's house in order to receive and to discuss the message. The messenger of this community, in turn, departs for the next in line. As a result of this practice the messenger and his home became one of the centers of social life.

621 614 361 623 The same uniformity is found in community II. Here we can also see the engangala, the meeting place of the village Isangi and of its branch villages. The meeting place is an open space in which stands a short tree with a broad crown. The representatives of the several villages gather in the shade of this tree since one of the open men's houses could not accommodate all of them. The senior of the nuclear kinship groups Mpia (No. 14), Nsambi (No. 15), and Liengo (No. 16) has his house on this spot which is situated on the border of the territory belonging to these three groups. The elder of Mpia, however, is the messenger for the hamlet of Boyeke; he may of course be identical with the "elder on the engangala."

614 621 Cohesion within the third settlement community was also so strong that it employs only one messenger. The kinship subgroup Nsambásílé which is concentrated in this hamlet is said to consist of the descendants of an illegitimate child of the daughter of the village founder (see Diagram 1). As is the case in many [782] [624] other villages, it is therefore entrusted with the office of the boténi, who carries out the sacrifice of human beings and animals on the proper occasions.

614 621 624 202 The three communities just described are relatively homogeneous groups; the three following ones are quite heterogeneous. The two groups of hamlet IV belong to the kinship subgroups Iyolo and Mbo. In contrast to the kinship subgroups Lovendo and Besilo, they regard themselves as sufficiently different from

614 each other to employ their own messengers. When the messenger
621 of settlement II arrives here, he first calls on the messenger of
624 the nuclear kinship group Bosóbé (No. 19) and then to Impínga
202 (No. 26). The messenger from Bosóbé calls on his relatives in settlement VI, who are the nuclear kinship group Mbelo-Mmuna (No. 22), while the messenger from Impínga-Ndongó formerly had to call on the group Bommambo which is now extinct.

Settlement V consisted of three different groups. Bolíma, the group of the father, had its own messenger; however, he only received the messages without having to pass them on, which is also the case with all these last groups of the village. Both neighbors had their own messenger. The messenger from settlement I called on the nuclear kinship group Bolesangi, his relatives; the messenger from settlement III went to his relatives of the nuclear kinship group Ituli.

There were also two messengers in the last hamlet, but reports on this subject are insufficient since the nuclear kinship group Bommambo has been extinct for a long time.

178 All the settlements just mentioned have a common
614 characteristic: formerly, at important dance festivals, their
621 young men performed together in one joint corps de ballet. The
595 population was decimated as a result of the rigors of [201] the
[161] occupation period and also as a result of the population movement into the cities. Consequently, there are not enough young people any more, and I with II, III with IV, and V with VI act together. Thus, in each case we find Ngelé and Nkoto united
[361] in one ballet. Although these groups have also been scattered as a result of the new settlement pattern (next to the highway), the old organizational structure has been preserved, and the young people do not hesitate to walk the long distance to the practice field every day so they can dance in the old groupings.

621 All of Isangi, all three kinship groups, have one common
624 village chief, the Nkúmú, with an iyolo nsáka who gets the meet-
622 ings started, and a village court with its judges. There are other groups which correspond to Isangi (31), but have more than one

31. See Müller, Fürstentum, pp. 73 ff., 76 ff., 133 f.

621 nkúmú. They, too, however, have only one man who opens a
624 meeting and one investigating judge. Only one of the nkúmú
622 has the function of judge. Consequently, we may say that even if the office is divided, the group still forms a unit as far as jurisdiction and political organization are concerned.

Among these groups we usually can observe a balanced
614 system of distribution as far as titles and offices are concemed.
621 It may either be predominantly democratic, as in Isangi, so
622 that all groups may lay claim to titles and offices, or it may be
624 oligarchic, as in Mbanga, where all power is vested in the oldest group of sons. In most cases, oligarchical groups tend to disintegrate; the younger groups attempt to free themselves from the rule. Democratic villages usually have a greater degree of cohesion.

In Isangi the small kinship groups of Ndongó (Nos. 2-4), Ngonga (No. 5), and Boyeke (Nos. 14-18) formerly had the privilege of furnishing the nkúmú. This practice has been discarded, and the honor is now rotated among the six local groups of the village. Only the small kinship groups of the Bolíma, Besilo, and Njíléokuli are excluded.

The six settlement communities of Isangi and similar
621 groupings found in other villages are parts of a village which
614 in my opinion are best described by the term hamlet [Weiler].

These are units which are predominantly intentional in nature. In spite of their functional weakness, they have survived even in the new settlement although they may not dwell together in a block. As a result of reintegration, they have lost their function as conscription district for the dancing groups in Isangi (see p. 25), but even at the present time they still represent the most important grouping in Isangi; we were aware of it before identifying any of the kinship groups. It is expected that they will lose their importance if Isangi does not return to its original site. By nature less closely connected with the or-
[562] ganization of the village of their husbands, the women have become the point of departure for the new order of things (e.g., for dance groups) which fulfills the requirements of the new settlement conditions.

614 Each hamlet includes one or several message districts.
621 Even at the time of the old settlement pattern the messenger
624 system was determined by the hierarchical structure and not
[202] at all by considerations of what was most practical (for example, the shortest route). Consequently this conservative institution of the conservative old men has not been affected at all by the relocation.

The villages are the communities of jurisdiction and of political life. Usually a nkúmú, presides over the meetings. If a village has several nkúmú, one of whom may be the judge or all may preside together, I have used the term "part of a village" [Dorfteil] for the district from which each nkúmú originates.

361 Those areas which have a special meeting place are here
621 referred to as a "province" [Gau]. The meeting place lies
178 within the territory of the oldest or second-oldest kinship group. The practical importance of this institution for the entire province is minimal, but the two meeting places [202] which we discovered still constituted, until a short time ago, important social centers for the duplicate villages forming the administrative centers of the respective provinces. As a result of the relocation, the meeting places have now lost their function completely.

000 I hope that this paper has added new material to the discussion on the subject of ethno-sociological terminology, and that it will stimulate criticism and a new discussion of this important subject.

8: Müller--28 E-5 (1951-1954) 1956 FO32 Mongo FO32
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